Claims

[c1]   In a computer–implemented rating system having access
         to a database populated with data concerning at least
         one non–economic factor, a method comprising:
         providing an interface capable of displaying at least a
         portion of the data;
         enabling a user to input at least one coefficient value
         through the interface;
         computing a sustainability score using the coefficient
         value and the data, the sustainability score utilzing the at
         least one non–economic factor in a formula that is view-
         able by the user through the interface; and
         outputting the sustainability score.

[c2]   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
         storing the user–input coefficient value in an account as-
         sociated with the user.

[c3]   The method of claim 1, wherein
         the data concerns non–economic factors for multiple
         companies,
         each company belongs to an industry,
         the interface further enables the user to select one of the
         companies and one of the industries, and

computing uses the data concerning the selected one of the companies.

[c4] The method of claim 3, wherein
the sustainability score for an industry is computed from data concerning non-economic factors of companies in the industry.

[c5] The method of claim 3, further comprising
presenting the formula to the user through the interface.

[c6] The method of claim 3, further comprising:
subsequently receiving later data concerning at least one non-economic factor for a company; and
computing a subsequent sustainability score for the company using the later data.

[c7] The method of claim 6, further comprising:
waiting to receive a verification flag respecting the later data prior to computing the subsequent sustainability score.

[c8] The method of claim 6, wherein
the later data is received from at least one of the public and the company.

[c9] The method of claim 6, wherein the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple companies,

the method further comprising:

defining a derivative index product comprising a selection of companies among the multiple companies,

pricing the derivative product; and

offering the derivative product for purchase and sale in a public market.

[c10] The method of claim 9, wherein
the later data is received as a response to a questionnaire.

[c11] The method of claim 9, further comprising:
establishing a secure entity reporting channel, and
wherein the later data is received over the channel.

[c12] The method of claim 1, wherein
the sustainability score includes a plurality of individual scores corresponding to discrete sustainability criteria.

[c13] The method of claim 12, wherein
the coefficient value is used to compute at least one of the individual scores.

[c14] The method of claim 12, wherein
the sustainability score is computed by combining at least two of the individual scores, and
the coefficient value is used to affect how the individual scores are combined.

[c15] The method of claim 12, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria include at least one of
a social responsibility rating, an environmental responsi-
bility rating, and a corporate governance rating.

[c16] The method of claim 15, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria further include an eco-
nomic rating.

[c17] The method of claim 1, further comprising:
benchmarking the sustainability score against a refer-
ence score.

[c18] The method of claim 1, wherein
the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple
governments,
the interface further enables the user to select one of the
governments, and
computing uses the data concerning the selected one of
the governments.

[c19] A computer for implementing a rating system, the com-
puter having access to a database populated with data
concerning at least one non-economic factor, the com-
puter comprising:
means for displaying at least a portion of the data and a
formula that generates a sustainability score;

means for enabling a user to input at least one coefficient value;

a processor configured to compute the sustainability score using the formula provided with the coefficient value and the data; and

means for outputting the sustainability score.

[c20]   The computer of claim 19, further comprising:

means for storing the user-input coefficient value in an account associated with the user.

[c21]   The computer of claim 19, wherein

the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple companies,

each company belongs to an industry,

the means for enabling the user further enables the user to select one of the companies and one of the industries, and

the means for computing uses the data concerning the selected one of the companies.

[c22]   The computer of claim 21, wherein

the sustainability score for an industry is computed from data concerning non-economic factors of companies in the industry.

[c23]   The computer of claim 21, wherein

a plurality of sustainability scores for respective companies is computed and compared.

[c24] The computer of claim 21, further comprising:
means for subsequently receiving later data concerning at least one non-economic factor for a company; and
means for computing a subsequent sustainability score for the company using the later data.

[c25] The computer of claim 24, further comprising:
means for waiting to receive a verification flag respecting the later data prior to computing the subsequent sustainability score.

[c26] The computer of claim 24, wherein
the later data is received from the public.

[c27] The computer of claim 24, wherein
the later data is received from the company.

[c28] The computer of claim 24, wherein
the later data is received as a response to a questionnaire.

[c29] The computer of claim 24, further comprising:
means for establishing a secure entity reporting channel, and
wherein the later data is received over the channel.

[c30] The computer of claim 19, wherein
the sustainability score includes a plurality of individual
scores corresponding to discrete sustainability criteria.

[c31] The computer of claim 30, wherein
the coefficient value is used to compute at least one of
the individual scores.

[c32] The computer of claim 30, wherein
the sustainability score is computed by combining at
least two of the individual scores, and
the coefficient value is used to affect how the individual
scores are combined.

[c33] The computer of claim 30, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria include at least one of
a social responsibility rating, an environmental responsi-
bility rating, and a corporate governance rating.

[c34] The computer of claim 33, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria further include an eco-
nomic rating.

[c35] The computer of claim 19, further comprising:
means for benchmarking the sustainability score against
a reference score.

[c36] The computer of claim 19, wherein

the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple governments,

the interface further enables the user to select one of the governments, and

the means for computing is adapted to use the data concerning the selected one of the governments.

[c37] A computer for implementing a rating system, the computer having access to a database populated with data concerning at least one non-economic factor, the computer comprising:

an interface configured to display at least a portion of the data, to enable input of at least one coefficient value, and to display a formula useful in computing a sustaintability score; and

a processor configured to compute the sustainability score using the formula in conjunction with any input coefficient values and the data, and

wherein the interface is further capable of outputting the sustainability score.

[c38] The computer of claim 37, further comprising:

a memory for storing the input coefficient values in an account associated with the user.

[c39] The computer of claim 37, wherein

the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple

companies,

each company belongs to an industry,

the interface further enables the user to select one of the companies and one of the industries, and

the processor uses the data concerning the selected one of the companies.

[c40] The computer of claim 39, wherein
the sustainability score for an industry is computed from data concerning non-economic factors of companies in the industry.

[c41] The computer of claim 39, wherein
a plurality of sustainability scores for respective companies is computed and compared.

[c42] The computer of claim 39, wherein
the interface is capable of receiving later data concerning at least one non-economic factor for a company; and
the processor is adapted to further compute a subsequent sustainability score for the company using the later data.

[c43] The computer of claim 42, wherein
the processor is adapted to further wait to receive a verification flag respecting the later data prior to computing the subsequent sustainability score.

[c44] The computer of claim 42, wherein
the later data is received from the public.

[c45] The computer of claim 42, wherein
the later data is received from the company.

[c46] The computer of claim 45, wherein
the later data is received as a response to a question-
naire.

[c47] The computer of claim 45, wherein
the interface is adapted to further establish a secure en-
tity reporting channel, and
the later data is received over the channel.

[c48] The computer of claim 37, wherein
the sustainability score includes a plurality of individual
scores corresponding to discrete sustainability criteria.

[c49] The computer of claim 48, wherein
the coefficient value is used to compute at least one of
the individual scores.

[c50] The computer of claim 48, wherein
the sustainability score is computed by combining at
least two of the individual scores, and
the coefficient value is used to affect how the individual
scores are combined.

[c51] The computer of claim 48, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria include at least one of
a social responsibility rating, an environmental responsi-
bility rating, and a corporate governance rating.

[c52] The computer of claim 51, wherein
the discrete sustainability criteria further include an eco-
nomic rating.

[c53] The computer of claim 37, further comprising:
the processor is adapted to further benchmark the sus-
tainability score against a reference score.

[c54] The computer of claim 37, wherein
the data concerns non-economic factors for multiple
governments,
the interface further enables the user to select one of the
governments, and
computing uses the data concerning the selected one of
the governments.

[c55] In a computer-implemented rating system having access
to a database populated with data concerning at least
one non-economic factor, a method comprising:
providing an interface, the interface including an audio
output portion capable of conveying at least a portion of
the data aurally;

enabling a user to input at least one coefficient value through the interface;

computing a sustainability score using the coefficient value and the data, the sustainability score utilizing the at least one non-economic factor in a formula that is accessible by the user through the interface; and

outputting the sustainability score.